The authority of taking punitive action against the companies/ agencies selling spurious seeds vests with the State Governments. The Central Government have, from time to time, advised the Bt. Cotton growing States to take punitive action against suppliers/vendors of spurious Bt. Cotton seeds.

Research facilities in agricultural bio-technology

†8. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that agriculture related research and extension programmes are facing neglect;

(b) whether it is also a fact that international research facilities are required to be developed in the field of bio-technology; and

(c) if so, the details of Government's initiatives in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has taken several initiatives for developing research facilities like infrastructure, equipment and training, in its defferent institutes and the State Agricultural Universities for enhancing the productivity and production of crops, livestock and fish through biotechnoloigical interventions. Development of human resource through training in specific areas in the world class national and internatinal laboratories, international collaborations, identification of priorities and action plan through meetings/workshops etc., development of network programmes are already being undertaken. In addition to the biotechnological work being undertaken at various ICAR insitutes, a National Research Centre for Plant Biotechnology, New Delhi and a National Research Centre on DNA Fingerprinting, New Delhi are already working on the aspect. Recently, action has been initiated to develop Indo-US collaborative research programmes focusing biotechnology as major field of research collaboration. A scheme 'National Fund for Basic and strategic Research' has also been sanctioned.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.